A SERMON

Preached before the Queenes

Maieſtie, the.25.day of Februarie
by Mayſter Edwarde De-
ring, in Anno.
1569.

To the Chriſtian Reader.

OF all the outwarde benefites that God hath beſtowed vppon man (welbeloued and Chriſtian Reader) there is none more profitable vnto the church of God, than to kepe by writing, thoſe things vttered, that are neceſſary, precious & godly. The voyce onely heard, periſheth quickly, and though for a tyme it worke inwardely, yet ſuch is mans weakeneſſe and infirmity, that it muſt not only be by liuely voyce beaten into his heade diligently, but alſo by writing ſet before him liuelye, and that continually. This ſermon therfore, as it was not long ſithens vttered zelouſly, and no doubt by the purpoſe of GOD himſelfe (who openeth the mouthes of his Myniſters, to ſpeake without feare) ſo nowe eſpeciallye for their ſakes, to whome then it was ſpoken, it is ſet out to their farther vew and conſideration: that things amiſſe, may be reformed, and true religion, ſincerely aduaunced, and againſt this time eſpecially, becauſe that a Parlament is inſtant and at hande: wherein (if GOD haue not ſealed vs vp to abide more feareful and horrible iudgementes) knowne abuſes ſhall be remooued and many vnprofitable ſtrifes ended. Surely, ſurely, if now it bee neglected, let vs not thinke long to eſcape vnpuniſhed. It will be to late the thirde daye to intreate for mercy. Tamerlan Gods vengeance, when his blacke tentes are once vp, though we come out neuer ſo humbly wyth Laurell in our handes, beclad in white garmentes, yet will he not be intreated, but by the ſelfe ſame ſinnes whereby we haue offended, with the ſame we ſhall bee puniſhed. The Iſraelites by murmuring and wiſhing Num. 11. 20.

li.19.25. fleſh,ſinned,& by fleſh they were puniſhed. The Leuits
Reg.11. wife playing the whoore, by hauing hir body abuſed,
was killed. Salomon the wyſe, greatly in Gods fauour
uit.10. at the beginning, ſinned through Idols, and therefore
Samu.4. was ouercome of Ieroboam an Idolatrer. Nadab and
Abihu offering ſtraunge fire vnto the Lorde, were both
of fire conſumed. Banah and Rechab killing Iſboſeth,
dicũ.9. were killed themſelues. Abimilech killing his bre-
dicũ.1. thren, was killed himſelfe of a woman. Adonibezeck,
cutting of the thumbes of the handes and feete of.70.
Regũ.22. Kinges, was taken himſelfe and vſed after that ma-
ner. Ahab the king of Iſrael, diſpiſing truth, and fo-
lowing lyes,was iuſtly plagued of God, when he ſent
forth a lying ſpirite to deceyue all his Prophetes. Terri-
zech.14. ble is that threatning of Ezechiel, when he ſayth that
God will ſeduce both Prophet and people, that they
both may periſh in lyes, which haue refuſed to follow
him in truth. As for you,O houſe of Iſraell (ſayth the
ize.20.39. Lorde) go you and ſerue euery one his Idol,ſeing that
you will not obay me. What ſhoulde I rehearſe anye
more examples? the ſcriptures are full, and they are
written for our learning, vppon whome the endes of
the worlde are come, that we ſhoulde take heede and
beware,leaſt we offende and periſh as they did: for if
we be equall with them in ſinne, and diſobedience, it
may ſafely be pronounced, that we ſhall feele the ſame
punithmentes. Happie therefore is that Prince, and
country that heareth Gods Miniſters with full purpoſe
of obedience,and happie are thoſe Miniſters, that in the
power and ſtrength of Gods ſpirite,and in aſſuraunce
of their calling, teach all men their dueties wythoute
blaunching and flatterie, whatſoeuer countenaunce
they

they beare vpon this ſtage of ſhort continuaunce, whether they be Princes or inferiours. For herein appeareth Gods loue towardes them, in awaking them out of the vaniſhing dreames of their lothſome pleaſures, to the performance of his work, which he wil not haue ſo neglected, that they ſhall preferre any worldely thing whatſoeuer before it. Nowe therefore Gods Church ſo long time neglected, we truſt ſhall be regarded, and the good counſayles of the Lorde, brought by his meſſengers and ſeruauntes, obayed. It is not vnknowne, what blinde and ignorant Miniſters are in the Church, what contempt creepeth vpon it dayly, what diuiſion hath ryſen in the ſame for the Popes trappinges, the tayle of Antichriſt, and the outwarde markes of the Romiſh beaſt: what hurt the quarell of them hath done to manye, what diſcredit it hath brought to a number, what ſorow to all the godly, what ioy to the wicked.

Nowe if they will not amende it, but yet through worldly pollicie retayne it, reſpecting the ſtrength of fleſh and bloud, let them thinke that this neglect of Gods ſpirite ſpeaking in his Prophets, with ſuch open contempt in denying to follow the knowne truth, cannot but prouoke Gods heauie and whote vengeaunce ſpeedily to be poured out vpon vs. The Sunne, Moone, and Starres, haue alreadie at his commaundement from heauen threatned vs. Bloudie cloudes haue appeared to terrifie vs. Straunge Monſters, Earthquakes, vnnaturall ſwelling of floudes and waters, and to conclude, vnwonted mouings of the earth, haue beene fearefull vnto vs. If theſe will not ſerue, more vehement ſicknelles, famine and hunger, ciuill warres & bloudſhed, with the taking away of our ſoueraigne (which God forbid,

and rather bleſſe with true godlineſſe,and long lyfe to raigne ouer vs) in the meaſure of our ſinnes will God poure out vpon vs,and ſo we ſhall periſh in his iuſtice vtterlye, that in mercy refuſed to embrace his truth obediently.

Therefore from the higheſt to the loweſt, let vs returne to the Lorde ſpeedily, and vnfaynedly : So ſhall Gods Church be reformed,our Miniſterie amended,the ſeruice of God by the infallible rule of his truth directed. The hireling, timeſeruer, and woolfe remooued, the godly and true Miniſter well prouided for and defended,and all ſtraunge worſhips, ſtraunge garmentes beſtayned with popiſh filthineſſe, and monuments that can repreſent nothing to our eyes, but execrable Idolatrie,be quite abandoned. Which God in his great mercie bring to paſſe for his Sonne Chriſtes ſake,Amen.

Farewell gentle Reader, and vſe this Sermon to thy comfort. I. F.

A Sermon preached before the Queenes Maieſtie, the .25. day of Februarie, by Mayſter Edwarde Dering. 1569.

O Lorde open thou my lippes, and my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy prayſe.

PSALME. 78. 70.

¶ He choſe Dauid his Seruant alſo, and tooke him from the ſheepefoldes, euen from behinde the Ewes great with yong tooke hee him: to feede his people in Iacob, and hys inheritaunce in Iſrael. So he fed them according to the ſimplicitie of his heart, and guided them by the diſcretion of his handes.

THe Prophete declareth in thys Pſalme, howe God of his iuſtice, for the great ſinne of Ephraim, tooke from that tribe both the tabernacle and the Scepter, and gaue them to the tribe of Iuda: whome then according to his mercy he had purpoſed to bleſſe with all perfite happineſſe. In which we learne not to abuſe Gods mercies, leaſt they be taken away from vs, as from the tribe of Ephraim they were. And then what helpeth it vs that in tymes paſt we haue beene happie? And leaſt this ſhould happen alſo vnto the tribe of Iuda, to fall from Gods mercies, into his diſpleaſure: the Prophete in this place ſtirreth them vppe to thankfulneſſe,

nesse, that they may be found worthie to haue continued towarde them so great blessings. And this he doth by example of Dauid, in shewing both how mercifully God had delt with him, and how obediently Dauid walked before the Lorde.

Three reasons.

And herein he vseth as it were three reasons to moue them withall: The first is of Gods great mercy whence he had called Dauid. The second is of Gods intent and purpose wherevnto hee called him. The third of Dauids owne person how faithfully and how truly he did execute that wherevnto he was called. The first Argument or reason he comprehendeth in these wordes: Hee chose Dauid his seruaunt, and tooke him from the sheepefoldes. The seconde in these wordes: Hee chose him to feede his people in Iacob, and his inheritaunce in Israel. The thirde in these words: So he fed them according to the simplicitie of his heart, and guided them with the discretion of his handes. These argumentes will I speake of, as God shall giue mee vtterance. And if they shall be now more effectuall to moue vs, than they were then to moue the people of Israel, then be wee profitable and happie hearers. If not, it is good right and reason, that as we haue bene in the felowshyp of the same sinne and iniquitie, so we should be partakers of the same rewarde and punishment: that if God shall so deale with vs, that we lose againe both the Tabernacle and Scepter, as they haue done before vs, we can say no other but the Lord is righteous, and behold we haue eaten the fruite of our owne labours. Let vs therefore consider of these arguments, and stirre vp as we may the gift of God that is in vs, that at length we may learne by them more holy obedience.

The first argument is the good consideration of Gods

Gods mercies whence he called Dauid. Which argument alone is so effectual and strong to styre vs vp to the obedience of our calling, that it is able ynough to rayse vs againe, though we were neuer so deepe sunken in rebellion. A sure proufe of the efficacie of it may be vnto vs the oft and continuall vse of it in the sacred Scriptures. For seeing that Gods spirite in his holy Worde doth so oft applie it, both as a helpe to confirme the godly, and as a present remedie to turne againe the most obdurate and wilfull sinner from his obstinate purpose: surelye, except all the dewes of Gods mercyes bee meruayloussly dryed vp in our barren heartes, the same argument if we can well thinke of it, will be effectual in vs to worke our regeneration in the newnesse of lyfe. When God would haue Abraham to forget his Countrie and his fathers house, to go that long & weary iourney into the land of promise, where he and his posteritie should dwell after him, he confirmed him with this saying: I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of Vr of the Chaldeans. Gen. 15. 7.

By this remembrance of his former benefites, he perswaded Abraham to aduenture all that he presently enioyed, vppon hope of a better promise, which yet hee had not seene, but which shoulde bee fulfilled.

When God would moous the children of Abraham, that is the children of Israel, to turne againe from their great iniquities that they had so longe practised in the hardnesse of their heart, he vseth but this argument, to tell them of all the miseries that they were borne in: there Countrie to be a cursed Countrie: their fathers Idolaters, themselues giuen ouer to all voluptuousnesse and pleasure, not regarding God, nor seeking his religion. In which wofull estate when the Lord god did behold them, Iosu. 24. 2. Gen. 11. 31. Exo. 3. 10.

Exo.12.37 he pitied their misery, and sayd euen thē vnto them: You shall liue. By which promise their former woe vanished away: and in steede of nakednesse they were clothed with broidred worke, they were couered with fine silke, decked with manye ornamentes, and had a crowne of beautie vppon theyr Iosu.23.16 heades. Now therefore that they should not walke Esa.43.34. in their owne waies, or commit Idolatrie as other Ezc.16.6. Gentiles did, nor treade such benefites vnder their feete: this argument as a strong medicine the Prophete repeated often, and with many wordes.

2.Samuel 12.7.8.9. 2.Samuel 15.17.18. 19. 1.Regum 14.7.8.9. 1.Regum 16.2.3.4. Iosu.24.2. Samuel 10.18. Actes.7.8.

Thus God delt oft with the kinges of Israel and of Iuda, when they beganne to fall away, and walke as other nations walked that were rounde about them. He called them backe by putting them oft in minde, howe his mercy had bene with them, and from what lowe estate he had rayſed them vp. Thus the Prophetes of God dealt often with the people. Iosua, when he had brought them into the land of Canaan, to the ende they might feare God, and so make their dwelling sure, he made vnto them a long repetition of Gods benefits, that by remembraunce of them, their dull spirites might be stirred vp the more obediently to follow God. Samuel, when he was afrayde of Gods heauie displeasure towardes the people of Israel, bicause they had asked a king for them: to the end they might turne away Gods anger from them by their speedie repentance, he tolde them what God had before done for them, as a readie way to make them beware afterwarde, how they did willingly offende so louing a father. Steuen when he would haue perswaded those, whose iniquitie was nowe growne to so full measure, that they had crucified Christ, as though in this alone were the greatest hope of amendement, he chose no other way to conuert them, but this,

this, to ſhewe in long exhortation what God had done for them, and for their fathers. And this as in the beginning it was giuen by the holye Ghoſt to man, as a ſoueraigne medecine to keepe him farre from vnthankfulneſſe: ſo it hath beene continued by the ſame ſpirite from tyme to tyme to ſtyrre vs vp not to forget the Lorde. Our ſauiour Chriſt to make his Diſciples ſure, and that they ſhoulde neuer ſhrink for aduerſitie, he told them often this, Iohn. 15. 16
that they had not choſen him, but hee had choſen them. Saint Paule, when hee would moue the Corinthians for to auoyde the falſe Apoſtles, and to follow Chriſt, he perſwaded them thus, that in tymes paſt they were Gentiles, and were willingly 1. Cor. 12. 2
lead awaye to dumbe Idoles. And againe to the Epheſians. You were in tymes paſt dead in treſ- Ephe. 2. 2.
paſſes and ſinnes, you walked after the Prince that ruleth in the ayre, after the ſpirite that nowe worketh in the children of diſobedience: but God who is rich in mercyes, through the great loue wherewith he loued vs, euen when we were dead, hath quickened vs in his ſonne Chriſt.

This argument, dearely beloued, ſeing it is ſo ſtrong, let vs apply it vnto our ſelues, for our diſeaſe cleaueth faſt vnto our bones with long continuance, and wee haue neede of ſharpe medicine to heale it agayne. Let vs therefore vſe it (I beſeech you) and if Gods ſpirit haue not forſaken vs, that wee be vncurable, no doubt we ſhall recouer and growe to amendement. Let vs ſee our own eſtate, and what God hath done for vs, what clowdye dayes haue gone ouer our heads, and in how fayre ſunne ſhyne we be ſet agayne, and no doubt where ſinne hereafter ſhal allure vs as before, it wil make vs afraide of his deceitfull baite, and we will neuer

be brought with the bewtie of the golden Cup to drinke of the ſpirituall whoredomes that are with-
Epheſi. 2. 11. 12. in. We were in tymes paſt Gentyles, & vncircumciſed people, nowe Chriſt hath pulled downe the wall of ſeperation, and made vs all one, euen hys children of adoption. We were aliaunts from the common wealth of Iſrael, now we are receyued as Citizens in the company of his faythfull. Wee were ſtraungers from the couenaunt and promiſe, now Chriſt hath delyuered a newe Teſtament, in which we alſo are written heyres of mercie. We lyued ſometime in ignorance, and had no hope, now we haue receyued knowledge, and are comforted. We were without God in the world, and could no where lay downe the terrours of our ſinnes, but now we haue receyued the ſpirite of adoption, by
Rom. 8. 15. which we cry, Abba Father. And what ſhould I ſay more? We were ſubiect vnto ſinne, hell, death and condemnation: nowe Chriſt hath ſpoyled the
Col. 2. 15. principalities and powers, delyuered vs out of the
Col. 1. 13. power of darkneſſe, tranſlated vs into a kingdome of immortality and grace. Except we haue ſet our
Ezech. 3. 9. hartes as an Adamant ſtone, or as the Prophet ſayth, made our hartes and faces lyke the flint: it is impoſſible but that this cogitation ſhould moue vs: Or if it do not, ſurely, ſurely, though the Lord had not ſpoken it thus often vnto vs, or if the ſcripture were not written for our inſtruction, yet the lawe of nature woulde condemne vs for moſt vnthankfull men. Day and night we ſhould beare a wytneſſe in our owne conſcience, howe fearefull iudgement God hath reſerued for ſo great iniquitie. Who amongſt vs coulde beare it, to be rewarded with vnthankfulneſſe, where we haue well deſerued? To be contemned of thoſe, whome we rayſed vp to honour? To be ſpoyled of thoſe, whome

before

before we had clothed? To be betrayed of thoſe, whom we haue eſpecially truſted? And how then are wee blinde and vnderſtande nothing? Howe ſhall the Lorde beare it at our hands, if we be vnthankfull vnto hym, if wee contemne him, rob him of his honor, who alone hath made vs glorious, when we were couered with our owne ſhame and confuſion? The Lorde graunt vs his holy ſpirit, that we deceyue not our ſelues.

There is nothing more effectuall to moeue a ſonne to obedience, then to know he hath a louing father. Nothing maketh ſo truſty the bondſeruant, as to remember he hath a gentle maiſter. Nothing maketh the ſubiect more faythful vnto his Prince, then to feele by good experience his Princes clemencye. Nothing ioyneth man faſter in the bonde of friendſhip, then to conſider wel what his friend hath done for him. And let nothing binde our obedience more carefullye to the worde and wyll of God, then that he hath ſo long continued mercifull vnto vs. As ſure as the Lorde doth lyue, thys is his holye truth: he that cannot bee mooued wyth this, he hath not Gods holy ſpirit: Poore or rich, bond or free, hye or low. Noble or of lowe degree, Prince or ſubiect, all is one. The remembrance of Gods mercie muſt make vs all thankful, were we neuer ſo mightye. This cogitation muſt baniſhe farre from vs the pride of a kingdome, to thinke howe God hath rayſed vs from the ſheepefoldes. Whoſoeuer can ſay thus: I haue beene bonde, but I am free: I haue bene in daunger, I am in ſafetie: I haue beene fearefull and trembling, I am carelesſe: I haue beene full of ſorrow, now my ſoule is at reſt: I haue beene in miſerie, I am in dignitie: I haue beene a priſoner, I am a Princes: beleeue me, beleeue me, if the great and goodly

Cities,

Cities, which he buylded not: if the houſes full of all maner of golde, which he filled not: if the vineyardes & Oliue trees, which he planted not, dyd not make him forget the Lorde, which brought him out of the lande of Egipt, out of the houſe of bondage: if proſperity haue not made him dronken, ſo that he hath baniſhed farre from him all ſence and vnderſtanding, the remembrance of this thing will make him thankfull vnto him that hath bene the worker.

Yea, euen you that are now a Princes of Maieſtie, if you haue felt any ſuch alteration, take heede, flye farre away from all vnthankfulneſſe. If you haue ſene the dayes, in which you haue ſayde: O Lord, I haue no friend but thee alone, nowe that proſperitie hath brought vnto you a great many of fayre countenaunces, forget not that God, who
Math. 7. 26 was your onely Friend in trouble. If in tymes paſt you haue prayed that you might not build vpon the ſande, to haue your houſe ſhaken with euery blaſt of wynde: now that you haue choyce of your own ground, take heede I beſeech you, where you lay your foundation. Nowe that the Sterne and Helme is in your own hand, guyde your Shyp ſo, that the waues do not ouer runne it. If you haue praied in tymes paſt vnto God to mollifie your enimies hartes, and to bring their cruell practiſes to nothing: now that you your ſelfe are ſet in ſafetie, be not cruell vnto Gods anoynted, & doe his Pro-
Pſa. 105. 15 phets no harme. I needc not ſeeke farre for offences, whereat Gods people are greeued: euen rounde about this Chappell I ſee a great manye, and God in his good tyme ſhall roote them out. If
Pſal. 44. 22 you haue ſayd ſometime of your ſelfe: tanquã ouis, as a ſheepe appoynted to be ſlayne, take heede you
Iere. 31. 18. heare not nowe of the Prophet, tanquam indomi-

ta

ta Iuuenca, as an vntamed and vnruly Heifer. I will not with many wordes admoniſh your Maieſtie that are wiſe ynough: onely I wyll ſay this, returne vnto your owne heart, and ſearche your raynes. And here I ſet before you the tribunall ſeate of Chriſt. If you knowe theſe things to be true, diſcharge the fayth you owe: grieue not your quyet conſcience, leaſt it begin to accuſe you, and the burthen of it be greater, than you ſhall be able to beare. If God haue defended you myghtily, as euer he did Dauid the Prophet: diſcharge your faith with the Prophet Dauid, & cry in ſpirit: Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi? What ſhall I giue vnto the Lord for all thoſe benefites that he beſtowed vpon me? Pſal.115.12

And thus much as God hath gyuen mee vtterance, I haue noted vnto you out of the firſt part of this ſcripture, how that God did chooſe Dauid from the ſheepefold. The Lord gyue you grace to confeſſe his goodneſſe, and ſhewe your ſelues more thankefull for all his benefites. One other thyng we may note here, that all that we haue of God, it is of his free mercy, it is not of our deſerving, euen as he gaue both the Tabernacle and the Scepter vnto the tribe of Iuda, becauſe he loued it. So GOD gaue vnto hys people a lande that flowed with milke and honie, but he gaue it not for their righteouſnes, for they were a froward people, but becauſe he loued them. So God dealt fauourably with Sion, that is with the children of Iſrael, not becauſe of their obedience, for they were a rebellious Nation: but becauſe hee remembred hys othe which he ſware vnto their forefathers. So God fulfilled the prophecie of Jacob, and he bleſſed Iudah, but he fulfilled it in Dauid, whom he tooke from the ſheepefoldes. So Chriſt made his Ioſu.5.6. Deut.1.8. Gen.49.6.

kingdome

1.Cor.1.27 and.28.29. kingdome euerlasting in the house of Iacob, but he layde first the foundation of it. And nowe hee hath buylded it vp neyther by the wisedome of the wyse, nor by the vnderstanding of the prudent, but to testifie vnto vs his free grace and mercie. Hee hath chosen the foolishe things of thys worlde, to confound the wyse, and the weake things of thys world to confounde the mighte: and vyle thinges of the world which are dispised, to bring to naught the things that are esteemed and had in reputation, for this cause alone (as the scripture witnesseth) that no flesh should reioyce in his presence.

This hee doth to beat down mans pride.

But what neede we so farre to seeke for examples? Let vs beholde our selues how plentifully at this day are Gods mercies and benefites poured out vpon vs, both vpon our Queene, and vppon hir people. How mightily doth he defend vs in so many daungers? How syt we here in safetie, when all the worlde is on an vproare? And is this thinke you, of our deseruing, or rather of Gods mercy? Now surely, surely, we were verie blinde, if wee would not all confesse with the Prophet Ieremy, that it is Gods mercie that wee be not consumed.

Lam.3.22. So much disobedience both in Prince and subiect, so little care of duetie, so deepe forgetfulnesse of God: what doth it else deserue, but heauie iudgement? What can it testifie else, but that all these blessings are of mercye? Well, well, the wyselt

Esay.59.2. waye is to take heede in tyme. Let not our sinnes seperate betweene God and vs. If there bee no where examples that we can looke vpon, yet let vs beware by the tribe of Ephraim, that we abuse not Gods mercies, for feare we lose them. Bicause we are now out of daunger, & there is no perill that is present, let vs not therfore say as prowd Babilon:

Apoc.18.7. I sit like a Queene, and shall see no euill, I shall be

a Ladie

a Ladie for euer, and ſhall ſee no loſſe of children.

He that thinketh he ſtandes (ſayth Paule) let him take heede he fall not. It is no good argument that our eſtate is ſure, becauſe God hath deliuered vs out of a great many of troubles. May, let vs the rather feare, & be the more circumſpect. Gods arme that hath bene ſtretched out for our ſafegard in tymes paſt, is not nowe drawne in that he cannot agayne grieue vs. God deliuered the people of Iſrael out of the handes of manye and grieuous enimies: but yet when the people of Iſrael would in no wiſe amend, God could rayſe vp Salmanaſar to lead them away to perpetual captiuity. May, we haue a great many more feareful examples then thys. We haue fearefull examples before our eyes, to take heede of Gods iudgementes, when wee abuſe his graces. God defended Senacherib in the conqueſt of a great many of countries, in al which he eſcaped harmeleſſe: yet when he knew not himſelfe, but blaſphemed the God of Iſrael, euen before the walles of Ieruſalem, God coulde finde him out at home in his owne country, and in the Temple of his Idols his owne ſonnes ſlue him. Agamemnon ten yeares togyther in moſtall and bloudy warres, could neuer be hurt: yet after, at home in his owne houſe by his owne wyfe he was kylled. Bibulus a noble Romane, gat many victories, and ſtill eſcaped perill: yet afterward in the Citie of Rome, when he ſhould haue had the glorie of all his valiaunt actes, and rode through the ſtreetes in the pride of his triumph, a tyle falling from the houſe, ſtroke ſo deepe into his head, that it kylled him preſently. Iulius Ceaſar, in winning the weſt part of the world, in 51. ſet battayles neuer receyued daungerous ſtroke: yet after all hys

1. Corin. 10 12.

2. Regum. 17. 6. 18. 9.

2. Re. 18. 9.

Eſa. 37. 12. 38.

Agamemnon.

Bibulus.

Iulius Ceſar.

daungers ſo happely eſcaped, at home in the Senate houſe, in the middeſt of his Nobilitie, and in his Parlament robes hee receyued. 24. woundes, and all of them deadly. Many ſuch examples are before our eyes, to make vs beware and take heede of ſecuritie, when anye daunger is paſt: and to take heede of forgetfulneſſe, when we haue receyued mercy. The Lorde enrich vs with the graces of his ſpirite, that when wee often beholde from whence we haue bene delyuered, we may ſeeke diligently, and be alwayes carefull howe to be found thankfull.

The ſecond argument.

The ſecond argument which I ſaide the Prophet vſed, to make the people thankful, was taken of Gods intent and purpoſe, to what ende he choſe Dauid, and that hee ſheweth in theſe wordes: To feede his people in Iacob, and hys inheritaunce in Iſrael. Theſe wordes are very playne, and contayne ſo expreſlye what is the duetie of any Prince or Magiſtrate, that none can be ignoraunt, but he that will not knowe. For this purpoſe they are choſen: To feede Gods people in Iacob, and hys inheritaunce in Iſrael. Whether hee bee Prince or Emperour, Duke, Earle, Lorde, Counſellour, Magiſtrate whatſoeuer, for thys purpoſe hee is called, diſcharge it as well as hee will: He muſt feede Gods people in Iacob, and his inheritance in Iſrael. O if God had called them for ſome other purpoſe, howe gladly woulde they haue executed it? If God had called them to dyſing and carding, to ſwearing and lying, to pride and vanitie, the mightie men of our dayes, how buſily had they done their duetie? But alas, this is not: To feede Gods people in Iacob, nor hys inheritaunce in Iſrael. This is to feede our ſelues. Euen

The office and dutie of Princes. and Magiſtrates.

as

as the Oxe is led to the ſlaughter houſe, ſo we doe
feede our ſelues to euerlaſting confuſion. They Mat. 11. 15
that haue eares to heare, let them heare. God had
choſen his rulers. To feede his people in Iacob, and
hys inheritaunce in Iſrael. These are the playne
and expreſſe wordes of Gods ſpirite: and then
what outragious ſpirite is that, or what Furie
rather, that cryeth thus with an impudent face,
that the Prince hath not to doe with Iacob, and
may not meddle with Iſrael? But theſe are the
ſteps that the man of ſinne ſhould tread, to ſpeake
agaynſt the Lord, and yet ſay that he cannot erre.
These are the liuely markes of Antichriſt, thus to
fight againſt Chriſt, and yet ſaye he is his Vicar.
Such is all the religion of Papiſtry, examine it if
you will euen from poynt to poynt. Where God
ſayth one thing, it ſayth ſtill contrary, and yet cry-
eth with ſhame ynough, there is no errour in it.
God ſayth, it is the doctrine of Deuils to forbyd 1. Tim. 4. 3.
mariage, and the lawfull vſe of meates: the Pope
preſumptuouſly forbiddeth both, and yet ſaith ſtyll
that he hath ỹ holy ghoſt. Paule the Apoſtle ſaith:
If you obſerue dayes and tymes, I am afrayde that Gala. 4. 10.
the Goſpell is preached vnto you in vaine: The 11.
Pope ſayth, you ſhall obſerue both. I can diſpence
with the Apoſtle, and yet he ſayth he is Apoſtoli-
call. Saint Peter ſayth: Be you ſubiect to the 1. Pet. 2. 13.
Prince, as to the chiefeſt: The Pope ſaith, the king
is not higheſt, but hee is aboue both kyng and
Keaſar, and yet he ſayth ſtill he is he Succeſſor of
Peter. And what ſhould I ſay more? It grie-
ueth me to recken vp all that monſters abhomina-
tions. It would make a chriſtian hart to bleede,
to ſee how he hath deceyued the ſimple. With his

paper walles and painted tyres, he made them so afrayde, that they beleeued all things whatsoeuer he had spoken. But he is filthie, and let him be filthie still. We will returne to our purpose, & learne of a Princely Prophet what is a Princes duety.

Apocal. 22. 11.

He must feede Iacob and Israel, that is, Kings must be Nurce fathers, and Queenes must bee Nurces vnto the Church of God. And to this ende they must vse their authoritie, that Gods children may learne vertue and knowledge. For to seeke onely worldly peace and securitie, or to make vs liue at ease here in this wayfaring citie, that is, rather to feede flesh and bloud, then to feede Iacob: rather to make happie this worldly fellowship, then to instruct Israel. The true Israelite is strong against the Lord, and commeth with violence to clayme the kingdome of heauen. What helpeth it in thys respect to be riche or honorable?

Esa. 49. 23.

Heb. 13. 14

If I had all the ritches in the worlde, yet coulde I not pay the price of my brothers soule. Or if I had neuer so much rule and authoritie, I am not therfore the neerer to make intercession vnto God.

Psa. 49. 78.

They are other weapons that must preuaile against Sathan: and it is an other attyre that will be accepted for the mariage garment. If we will feede Iacob and Israel, let vs leade them to the house of wisedome, and trayne them vp in the feare of God. The Lord open the Queenes Maiesties eyes, that shee may looke to this charge: Otherwyse if we lyued neuer so peaceably vnder hir, yet when the Lorde shall come to aske accompt of hir stewardshyp, how she hath fed hir fellow seruaunts with the meate appoynted them, then shee will be found eating and drinking with sinners.

Ephe. 6. 13. Mat. 22. 11.

But bicause wee are so dull of hearing, that a little teaching of our dutie is not sufficient for vs,

Luke. 11. 42. 46.

I

I will ſhew out of the ſcriptures ſomewhat more plainly, if ought may be playner, what is the dutie of a Prince. The Prophete Eſay very effectually ſetteth it out in the perſon of our Sauiour Chriſt, ſaying: Righteouſneſſe ſhall be the gyrdle of his loines, and faithfulneſſe the buckle of his reines. It is true that the Prince muſt defende the fatherleſſe and widdow, relieue the oppreſſed, and haue no reſpect of perſons in iudgement, ſeeke peace vnto hys people, and gyrde himſelfe with righteouſneſſe: But this is alſo his dutie, and his greateſt dutie, to be carefull for religion, to maintaine the Goſpell, to teach the people knowledge, and builde his whole gouernance with faithfulneſſe. For this cauſe king Salomon, both the mightieſt and the wiſeſt king that euer was, called himſelfe a preacher. And king Dauid, to teſtifie howe hee knowledged his dutie, ſpake openly to his people: I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the waye that thou ſhalt go, and I will guide thee with mine eye. This generall rule king Salomon gaue vnto other: Bee diligent to knowe the eſtate of thy flocke, and take heede vnto thy Heardes. For riches remaine not alwayes, neyther the crowne from generation, to generation. Expreſſely ſhewing, that to encreaſe riches, or to ſet forth the glorie of a kingdome, that is not the greateſt duetie of a Magiſtrate. Thus the prophet Hoſeas, crying out againſt the people of Iſrael, hee reckeneth vp this as their greateſt diſorder, that lying and ſwearing, and ignorance of God was not punished amongſt them.

Eſay. 11. 5.

Pſal. 32. 8.

Prouer 27. 23. 24.

Hoſ. 4. 2.

And alas (dearely beloued) if this be the ſaying of the Prophete, let vs looke vnto it. I dare not but ſpeake the truth, ſeeing God hath called me hether. He hath rapted me vp ſo hie, when I was

caſt downe, that I cannot forget his beneſites. If this will not ſerue, I will ſurelye ſpeake it more plainely, when the Lorde ſhall open my mouth againe. Surely if this be the ſaying of the Prophet (as it is in deede) that lying, that ſwearing, that blinds and wilfull ignorance ſhall be puniſhed, let not the Princeſſe deceiue hir ſelfe, the ſpirit of God doth not poſſeſſe hir heart, if ſhe heare dayly, lying and blaſphemous ſwearing, and ſee the peoples ignorance, and yet leaue all vnpuniſhed. Looke vnto theſe thinges better, if you will looke well vnto your ſelfe: you cannot pretende ignorance, this is plaine inough, if any thing be inough. And yet leaſt you ſhould ſeeke to buſily to be decepued, I wyll rehearſe the plaine lawe of the Lorde. That thys doctrine may be warranted with the ſurer witneſſes, god ſaith of a king in the. 17. of Deuteronomy:

Deut. 17. 18 19. 20. &c. When he ſhall ſit vpon the throne of his Kingdom then ſhall hee write him this lawe repeated in a booke, by the prieſtes of the Leuites. And it ſhall be with him, and he ſhall reade therin all the dayes of his lyfe: That he may learne to feare the Lorde his God, and keepe all the wordes of his lawe, and theſe couenaunts, for to do them. That his heart be not lifted vp aboue his brethren. That he turne not aſide from theſe commaundements, neyther to the right hand, nor to the left. But that he may prolong his dayes in his kingdome, hee and his ſonnes in the middeſt of Iſrael.

Pſa. 10. 7. 1. Regū. 15. 12. 13. 1. Reg. 22. 41. This law I know not how your Maieſtie ſhall interpret, becauſe I know not your ſpirite: but of this I am ſure, it made Dauid, that he would not ſuffer a wicked man in his houſe. It made Aſa driue awaye the Sodomites oute of Iſrael, put downe

downe the Idolles, depoſe his owne mother from hir dignitie. It made Ieoſophat, Ezechias, Joſias, euen in the beginning of their raigne, to make godly and zealous reformations in religion, and neuer conſulted farther with the hie prieſtes. May, it made Salomon to put downe Abiather that was the hye prieſt, and to place Sadoc a better in hys rowme. This made manye godly Emperours in the primitiue Church, to call generall Councels, to reforme many miſorders crept into the Church: to depoſe many ambicious and prowde Popes, and place better in their rowme. And he that denyeth this, denieth the Sunne to ſhine at noone dayes. And as this law hath thus wrought heretofore: ſo when it lighteth in a good ſpirite, I am ſure it will doe the like hereafter. It will mooue a godly Maieſtrate, to haue his chiefeſt care to maintaine religion, and to ſuppreſſe ſuperſtition. And ſuch is Gods righteous iudgement, that whoſoeuer ſhall doe the contrarye, I am ſure his owne conſcience will condemne himſelfe. It is the lawe of nature, and it maketh the moſt wickedſt Magiſtrate to ſigh and ſaye in his heart, in remembraunce of hys ſinne: Sure this doyng will not laſt alway, God hath appoynted me for ſome other purpoſe. This was the greateſt fault that prowde Agamemnon coulde finde in all the glorye of hys Kingdome, Τὰ θεῶν ὅκ ὀρθωθέντα ἀνέτρεψε τὸν βίον. when Gods cauſe goeth not vpright, it layeth the glory of my kingdome in the duſt, it turneth vpſide downe all my lyfe and happineſſe. Thus it happeeneth with the wicked whoſoeuer they are: they condemne their owne doing, when they ſeeke not to ſet out the glorye of God. The lawe of God hath thus commaunded it, the godly kings of Juda and Jeruſalem haue euermore practiſed it, the faythfull

2. Reg. 8. 4.
1. Re 19. 4.
1. Reg. 2. 3.

Agamemnon.

Empe-

Emperours in the primitiue Church made it their chiefest studie, the lawe of nature hath engrauen it in the heart of man: and what godlye Prince can nowe sleepe in securitie, if he haue no care vnto it? Especially seeing God is God of all Magistrates, and they are his creatures. This is their greatest studie, to shewe obedience vnto him, to feede hys people, and set forth his religion.

But here I thinke some will easily say: If this be so as you teache it, then the case is cleare, the Prince is a spirituall Magistrate: It belongeth vnto him to reforme religion: he is the hyest Iudge in the Church of God, to establishe that by lawe which the lawe of God hath appointed. How then that the Pope seeth not this? why doe not others see it, that reade and knowe the scriptures? The Emperours themselues, why haue not they seene it? Howe grewe the Pope vp to suche vnbridled authoritie? Howe the Pope shoulde come to so great auctheritie, I know no cause but this, that it was the will of God, and such was the depth of his secrete iudgements: The purple whore shoulde make all the Princes of the earth to drinke of the cups of hir fornications. But for the Popes seeing or not seeing of his owne abhominations, I know not his eye sight, I cannot tell whether he doth see them, or see them not, but I thinke he seeth them. For I see in all ages, howe God hath raysed vp some & haue inueyed bitterly agaynst his intollerable pride. If he seeth it not, his eyes are very sick, & himselfe is a verier beast than euer was Nabuchodonosor. And the Lorde be praysed, that hath hardned his prowd hart, and reueled better knowledge vnto little ones. Why other should not see it that reades the scriptures as well as we, and are as well learned as we, I can assigne no other cause,

Apoca. 17. 2. 4.

Dani. 4. 30.

Mat. 11. 25.

but

but ſay with the Prophete, Gods iudgements are like to a great depth. They are as they are, and what they are it ſkilleth nothing vnto vs. I came not hither to compare with learning, who bee Hebrues, and who be none. I am ſure, if they did ſeke him in the ſimplicity of their hart, and call after him in the truth, not in their owne inuentions, that then they ſhould finde him. Now they ſeeke the lyuing ſprings in vaine, becauſe they ſeeke them in the puddels that they haue digged themſelues. And they ſeeke for the Goſpell of ſaluation in vaine, becauſe they followe the doctrine that is but preceptes of men. But what if many learned ſee it not? Is it not therefore truth, that is ſo playne in the ſcriptures? 2. Cor. 11. Pſal. 36. 6. Iere. 2. 13. Math. 15. 9.

Let me aſke againe I beſeech you this queſtion: Why did not Pharao ſee, that Moyſes and Aaron were ſent of God? They turned all his waters into bloud: They brought vpon him Frogs that couered all his lande: They plagued him wyth great ſwarmes of Lice and Flyes: They feared him with thunders and lightning, and with great tempeſts: They made darkneſſe thick and ſenſible vppon the face of the earth: They ſlewe the firſt borne of all that was in the land: Why knewe not Pharao that they were ſent of God? They deuided the red ſea, and went thorowe on drye lande: What madneſſe made him venter to go ſo deſperatly after? Why would he not be taught, till the water couered him, and all the hoſt? ſhoulde the age that came after him reaſon thus againſt Iſrael: If your God bee the Lorde of heauen and earth, why did not our fathers knowe him: Why did not the Scribes and Phariſeys know Chriſt to be the Meſſias? They heard Iohn Baptiſt giue him plaine teſtimonie: Why did they not beleeue him? Exo. 7. 20. Exo. 8. 6. Exo. 8. 17 Exo. 8. 24 Exo. 9. 23 Exo. 10. 22 Exo. 12. 29 Exo. 14. 21 Exo. 14. 28 Iohn. 1. 27

The ſame Chriſt fulfilled all that was ſpoken by the Prophets: why could they not ſee that he was
Mat.11.5 the Sauiour of the worlde? Hee made the blinde to ſee, the deafe to heare, the dumbe to ſpeake, the
Mat.9.4 lame to go. He made the ſicke and diſeaſed whole.
Ioh.11.34 He rayſed vp the dead: Hee tolde vnto them euen their thoughts and cogitations. Howe were they ſo dull of vnderſtanding, that yet they coulde not know him? If this may be ſufficient to reproue a truth (why do not other ſee it,) then the Phariſeis reaſon well agaynſt Chriſt, when they ſayde
Ioh.7.48 vnto the people: why do none of the Princes and rulers beleue in him?

But ſee I beſeech you, how great is our madneſſe that thus reaſon of other men, why they ſee or ſee not. Why haue we our ſelues ſo great beames
Math.7.3 in our eyes, that wee cannot ſee our owne eſtate and condition? Why doe we not ſee the ſhortneſſe
Heb.13.14 of our lyfe, but thus liue in the worlde, as though
Rom.3.5 we ſhould liue euer? Seing we haue a righteous
Ro.2.2 3.4 God, that will be a reuenger of his owne cauſe, and
Iam.4.14. punish our tranſgreſſions, why doe wee ſinne yet
Eſa.4.6.7 dayly more and more? Seing our life is but a vapour, and all our glorye is but as the flower in the fielde, why bee wee ſo bewitched with loue of ſo great vanitie? Seing our eſtate ſhal be before God euerlaſting, and theſe accompted dayes come ſo faſt to an ende, that we ſhall bee ſpeedily called: why
Ioh.5.24 be we ſtil ſo careleſſe in what ſort we ſhal appeare?
Ioh.8.15 Seing Gods threatninges are ſo neare vnto vs, and the daungers that hang ouer our heades are ſo many: ſeeing Gods iudgements are ſo fearefull, and his wrath burning for euer: why are wee ſo careleſſe? And why is it yet true, that was ſpoken ſo long agone?

Heu viuunt homines tanquã mors nulla ſequatur:

Aut

Aut velut infernus fabula vana foret.

Why doe we liue as though wee ſhould neuer die, and as though hell fire were an olde wiues fable? Beleue mee, beleue mee, this is intollerable blindeneſſe, ſeing we be ſo bleare eyed our ſelues, that we can not ſee before vs neyther heauen nor hell, yet that wee will reaſon agaynſt Gods truth, by any mans eye ſight whether he ſee or ſee not. If we liſt to maruell at the duineſſe of mans eyes, we cannot well maruell at any thing ſo much, as at our owne fooliſhneſſe, that cannot ſee our ſelues. Let vs loke at the laſt to our owne eſtate, and as for other men, let vs leaue them vnto the Lorde, hee doth knowe moſt aſſuredly who be his. They are not the wiſe & prudent of this world that he hath choſen. There are not many Princes and noble men in the face of his Church. If Princes and Magiſtrates will be ſtil rebellious, what is that to vs? If the Pope and his hyrelings will be blinde ſtill, yet the ſcripture is the ſcripture. The vnfaythfull Steward neuer liueth more riotouſly, than when his Lorde is euen at hand to call him to his accountes. The fooliſh virgins are neuer faſter a ſleepe, than when the Bridegroome is readie to enter into hys wedding Chamber. The children of this world are neuer buſilier occupied, than the night before theyr ſoules ſhall be taken from them. The ſonne of perdition ſhall neuer bee more loſtie, than in theſe latter dayes when he ſhall bee reuealed. But for theſe that are ſo blinde, let them bee blinde ſtill: let vs approche vnto the throne of grace with fayth, that the ſecretes of the Lorde may be reuealed vnto vs. As for Kinges and Emperours, if you will yet aſke why could they not ſe it, but commit themſelues vnto ſo great ſlauerye: alas poore creatures, howe coulde they ſee in the midſt of ſo great

Ioh. 10.14
2. Tim. 2.19
1. Cor. 1.26
Luk. 16.1.
Mat. 25.6
Lu. 12.20
2. The. 2.4
Heb. 4.16

Apoc. 15. 8
Apo. 5. 2

darkneſſe? How could they reade, when the booke was faſt ſealed? Howe coulde they diſcerne the voyce, when they heard no ſounde, but of tinkling Cymbals? But this was the great ſubtiltie and craft of Sathan. He knoweth how willingly we be caried to worldly ſtudies, and whether wee did incline, thither he thruſt vs headlong. He knoweth what corruption he hath ſowne in our nature, and howe vnwillingly wee meddle with the things of God: and therefore it was an eaſie practiſe for the Pope his miniſter, to pull away heauenlye cares from all Princes gouernmentes. They are greeuous vnto fleſh and bloud, and ſuch as kings loue not to meddle withall. This was one meane why Princes did not their dutie. In other was as great as this: they heard the Pope ſo magnifyed, that they thought him halfe a God, when they were once perſwaded the Popes pardons ſhould bee no ſmall diſcharge, who woulde not willingly ſubmit himſelfe with all humilitie to receyue it? If wee may liue all our lyfe in ryot, and yet after thorowe the Popes bleſſing reſt in the peace of the Church: who would refuſe any popiſh ſubiection? Make men once drunke with this opinion, and they are at your commaundement to doe what you will: Barefoote and barelegge they will wayte at your gate, ſet your foote if you will in the Emperours neck, he will refuſe no villanie.

Well, nowe that God hath delyuered vs out of that kingdome of darkeneſſe, nowe we knowe the Pope to be Antichriſt, his prayers to be euill, hys pardons to be worſe than the ſynne of witchcraft: let vs looke at the laſt to our own dutie, and truſt no more to ſuche a broken ſtaffe. If GOD hath made vs Princes or Magiſtrates, let vs feede his people in Jacob, and hys inheritaunce in Iſrael.

This

This is our duty, let vs harken vnto it: and that we may do it the better, let vs inquire how it may beſt be diſcharged. And I beſeech your Maieſtie to harken, I wyll ſpeake nothing accordyng to man, which maye eaſely bee contemned: but that which I will ſpeake ſhall be out of the mouth of the Lorde: in obeying where of ſhall conſiſt your ſafegard, and the health of your kingdome. The ſafegarde of a Princes true obedience to God

Eſpecially and aboue all things looke vnto your miniſtery. There is no commaundement gyuen oftner in the olde teſtament: none gyuen oftner in the newe. When God woulde ſpecially bleſſe the people of Iſrael, he ſcattred the Leuits among the other tribes, that the Lawe might bee taught in all the coaſtes of Iewry. When Chriſt woulde bring into the world the light of the Goſpel, he ſent forth hys Apoſtles to preach vnto euery creature. In the olde lawe God ſignified by many outward tokens, howe neceſſary the Prieſthood was for the inſtruction of his people, and what Prieſts he requyred. The ſtaues were alwayes in the rings of the Arke, the laumpe euer burning, to ſhewe that the Prieſtes ſhoulde alwayes declare the will of God vnto hys people, and offer vp the ſweete incenſe of contynuall prayer. On the neather ende of the robe of the Ephod, were bels alway ſounding, to teache that the Prieſt ſhoulde bee euer heard, whereſoeuer he did go, and ſhewe himſelfe a Meſſenger of the Lorde of hoſtes. In the breaſtplate he had Urim and Thumim, two lyuely preſentations of Gods preſence, to be witneſſes vnto the Prieſt of his knowledge and righteouſneſſe. In the plate of golde vpon his forehead was engrauen in great golden letters, holyneſſe vnto the Lorde: to teſtifie hys vpryght lyfe and conuerſation. God forbade any ſtraunger to enter in among them, Nume. 3 Exo. 25. 19 Exod. 28. 33 34. 35. Exo. 28. 30 Exo. 28. 36

them, except he were circumcised in hart. And of the childzen of Aaron, if anye had faulted in his ministerie, he should by no repentance be receyued againe to the Priesthood. Thys was the care that God had then of his Priesthood, that he myght keepe in holynesse all the childzen of Israel.

This is the care that wee must haue of our Ministerie, if we will haue the Gospell of Christ to grow. This care was greatest vnto the godlye Rulers and Princes of Israel, to the ende they might keepe the sanctuary vndefiled. This care must be greatest in those that be christian Magistrates, if they loue Gods glozye, and the increase of his Gospell. Thus did king Salomon in the beginning of his raigne, when he put downe Abiathar, and made Sadoc highe Priest. Thus dyd Ieosaphat, when to reforme religion he sent forth Leuites into the coastes of Israel. Thus did Ezechias at the entrance of his kingdome, when this was his first care, how the Leuites might be prouided for. But of al other, Moises who had receiued the commaundement of God himselfe, as appeareth, did especially see what was the necessitie of the minister. In the. 33. of Deuteronomy, a little before his death, thus he maketh his prayer: Let thy Vrim and Thumim be with thy holy one, whom thou diddest proue in Masah, and diddest cause him to serue at the waters of Meribah, who sayde vnto his father and to his mother: I haue not seene them, neyther knoweth he his brethren, nor yet his owne children, but they obserued thy word and kept thy couenaunt. They shall teache Iacob thy iudgements, and Israel thy law. They shall put insence before thy face, and burnt offering vpon thy aulter. Blesse O Lorde his substaunce, and

1 Reg. 2. 25
2. Cron. 18
78.
2. Re. 18. 1.
2. Croni. 29
4. 5. 6. 7.
&c.
Deut. 33. 8
9. 10. 11

accept

accept the worke of his handes. Smite through the loynes of them that riſe vp agaynſt hym, and of them that hate hym, that they riſe not vp agayne. Marke I beſeech you, both his great care howe the Leuites might proſper, and his notable deſcribing of them, what maner of men they ſhall bee. Firſt, he prayeth that true knowledge and vnderſtanding be neuer remooued from them: their affection towardes Gods Sanctuarie may be ſuch, that neyther father nor mother, wyfe nor children doe keepe them backe from obedience to the lawe and couenant. O that our Miniſters were ſuch as Moiſes prayed for. Then no doubt God woulde bleſſe them according to their requeſt, & confounde their aduerſaries that riſe vp againſt them. And here alſo marke his great zeale for their proſperity. He was the pacienteſt man, and had the myldeſt nature of all the people of Iſrael: yet coulde he not ſuppreſſe his good and great affection, but brake out into theſe wordes: Smite through the loynes of them that riſe vp againſt him, and of them that hate him, that they riſe not vp againe. O Lorde, if Moyſes had lyued in our dayes, and ſeene this adulterous generation that ſo ſpoyleth the Leuits, how would his zeale haue beene inflamed againſt them? Hee would haue cryed out as good Nehemias cryed: Plague them O Lord, that defile thy Prieſthood. And good were it for theſe ſinfull men, that God would ſend his plagues vpon them, while yet they haue time to repent. Now we want a Moiſes to pray for theyr puniſhment, for they ſleepe in their ſynnes: and God I feare hath reſerued them to a greater puniſhment. The Lord graunt vs grace to remember the latter end, and now looke while it is yet time, to the good or-

Nehemi. 6 14. Capi. 13 29. 30.

der

der of the Ministerie. When God promised to establishe his mercies with his Church, hee promised thas, as the greatest token of hys loue:

Iere.3.15 I wyll giue you Pastors according to my hart, that shall feede you with knowledge & vnderstanding. When he would haue them haue sure hope that he was their God, and they were his people, he sayde he would giue them Leuites that should teach hys people, the difference betweene the holye, and prophane, betweene the vncleane, and the cleane: he promysed them thys as a perpetuall couenaunt:

Mala.2.7 The lips of tùe Priest shall keepe knowledge, and they shall seeke the Law from his mouth: For he is the Messenger of the Lorde of hostes. And this was the charge that God gaue straitely vnto the

Esay.58.1 Priesthood: That they shoulde tell his people of their sinnes, and the house of Iacob their offences. A miserable common wealth it must needes be, and farre seperated from God and his mercies, that hath blynde leaders, who cannot leade themselues. Who so feareth the Lorde wyll surely looke vnto it, that he maintayne no such offences wythin his kingdome, nor nourishe any such sores in the body

1.Pet.5.2. of his countrie. If a man be once called to the ministerie, let him attende vpon his flocke, and feede them as his duetie bindeth him, with the foode of lyfe, or lette him bee remooued. Christ sayde:

Iohn. 21 16.17.18 Pasce, pasce, pasce, Feede, feede, feede. This charge he hath giuen, euen as we loue him, so to see it executed. Say what we will say, and the more wee saye it, the more impudently we shall lye, if we say we loue him, whyle we keepe not hys commaundements. Would to god we were wise to vnderstand it. Christ sayde they are the salt of the earth,

Math.5.13. and what shall be done with them, if they can season

ſon nothing? Chriſt ſayde, they are the light of the worlde: and what heape of miſeries shal they bring with them, if they themſelues be darke? Chriſt ſayde, they be the watchmen: and what cale ſhall the Citie be in, if they do nothing but ſleepe, and delight in ſleeping? who ſeeth not theſe incurable ſickneſſes, that can ſee anye thing? They are the Paſtors, & how hungry muſt the flocke be, when they haue no foode to gyue them? They are the teachers: and how great is the ignoraunce, where they themſelues knowe nothing? They are the Euangeliſtes or Meſſengers of gladde tydings: how little hope haue they, and what ſlender fayth, whoſe Meſſengers cannot tell what the Lorde ſayth?

The Lorde enlarge within your Maieſtie, the bowels of mercye, that you may once haue pitie vpon your poore ſubiects. This cogitation made Paule ſay to Timothy, a painefull father vnto a carefull childe: I charge thee before God, and before the Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, that ſhall iudge the quicke and deade at his appearaunce, and in his kingdome: preache the worde, be inſtant in ſeaſon, & out of ſeaſon: reproue, rebuke, exhort. &c. 1. Tim. 1. a

Of all miſeries wherewith the Church is grieued, none is greater than this: that hir Miniſters bee ignoraunt, and can ſay nothing. What could Ieroboam do more than this, to ſtrengthen all his Idolatrie, then to make him Prieſtes of the loweſt of the people? What could haue made Aſa (being otherwiſe religious) ſo ſoone to haue turned away from the ſeruice of God, ſauing onely he ſuffered his people to be without a Prieſt, which coulde teach them the worde of God? What plague did God threaten greater againſt a rebellious people, 1. Reg. 13. 33. 2. Cor. 15. 8

than that hee woulde take from them their true
Esay. 3. 2. Prophets: when were the peoples sinnes so ripe
Esay. 56. 10 to procure vengeaunce, as when their Preachers
were dum Dogs, & coulde not barck? And what
I beseech you is our condition better? Or what
2. Cro. 13. 9 be manye Ministers of our tyme and Countrie,
other than dum Dogs? Surely, as Ahijah sayde
of the people of Israel, so we may say of our Mi-
nisters: Haue we not made vs Prieستes lyke the
people of our Country? who so euer commeth to
consecrate with a yong Bullock, & seauen Rams,
the same may be a Priest for them ẏ are no Gods.
And so surely if we serued Baal, a great number
of our Prieستes at this day were tollerable. But
if we serue the Lord, what do they with that func-
tion they cannot skill of? Let them returne againe
to their olde occupation. And yet this is but one
euill: and if it were reformed, yet much still were
amisse. If I would declare vnto your Maiestie
all the great abuses that are in our Ministerie, I
Ezech. 8. 3. 4. 5. &c. should leade you along in the spirite, as God dyd
the Prophet Ezechiel: and after many intollera-
ble euils, yet I shall say still vnto you, beholde you
shall see mo abhominations than these.

I would first leade you to your Benefices, and
beholde some are defiled with impropriations, some
with sequestrations, some loaden with pensions,
some robbed of their commodities. And yet behold
more abhominations than these. Looke after this
vpon your Patrones, and loe, some are selling their
benefices, some farming them, some keepe them
for their children, some giue them to Boyes, some
to seruing men, a very fewe seeke after learned Pa-
stors. And yet you shall see more abhominations
than these. Looke vpon your Ministerie, and there
are some of one occupation, some of another, some

shake

ſhake buckiers, ſome Ruffians, ſome hawkers and Hunters, ſome Dicers and Carders, ſome blinde guides, and cannot ſee, ſome dumbe dogs and will not barcke. And yet a thouſande moe iniquityes haue nowe couered the Prieſthood. And yet you in the meane while that al theſe wyckedomes are committed, you at whoſe handes God will require it, you ſit ſtill and are careleſſe, let men do as they liſt. It toucheth not belike your common wealth, and therefore you are ſo well contented to let all alone. The Lord increaſe the giftes of his holy ſpirite in you, that from fayth to fayth you may grow continually, til that you be zealous as good king Dauid, to worke his will. If you knowe not howe to reforme this, or haue ſo little counſell (as mans heart is blinded) that you can deuiſe no way, aſke counſell at the mouth of the Lorde, and hys holy wyll ſhall be reuealed vnto you.

To reforme euill Patrones, your Maieſty muſt ſtrengthen your lawes, that they may rule as well hye as lowe. As Eſdras ſayde once, ſo may I ſaye nowe: The handes of the Princes and Rulers, are chiefe in this treſpaſſe. If you will haue it amended, you muſt prouide ſo that the higheſt may be afrayde to offende. To keepe backe the ignorannt from the Miniſterie, whome God hath not called to ſuch a function, take away your authoritie from the Biſhoppes, let them not thus at their pleaſure make Miniſters in their Cloſſet, whome ſo euer it pleaſeth them. To ſtop the inconueniences that grow in the myniſtery by other, who ſay they are learned and can preach, and yet doe not, that are as I ſayde dum Dogs, and will not barcke, bridle at the leaſt their greedie appetytes, pull out of theyr mouthes theſe poyſoned bones, that they ſo greedily gnaw vpon. Take away Diſpenſations, Plu- Eſdr. 9. 2

ralities, Totquotes, Nonreſidences, and ſuche o-ther ſinnes. Pull downe the Court of Facultyes, the Mother and Nurce of all ſuch abhominations. I tell you this before GOD, that quickeneth all things, and before our Lorde Jeſus Chriſt, that ſhall iudge the quicke and the deade, in his appea-raunce, and in his kingdome: amend theſe horrible abuſes, and the Lorde is on your right hande, you ſhall not be remooued for euer. Let theſe things a-lone, and God is a righteous God, he will one day call you to your reckening. The God of all glorie open your eies to ſee his hie kingdome, and enflame your heart to deſire it.

The third thing that I ſayde in this place was to be noted, was of Dauid himſelfe, how faythfull-ly he executed that whereunto he was called. The Prophet ſayth: He fed them in the ſinceritie of his hart, and guided them with the diſcretion of hys handes. An excellent vertue, and meete for King Dauid, that was a man according to the hart of God. He knewe that obedience was better than ſacrifice: and that Gods people were neuer better ruled, than when their Princes brought into cap-tyue their owne vnderſtanding, and in ſimplicitie of heart were obedient only to the wiſedome of God. He had to good experience of his owne wiſdome, and had tryed it often howe it made him to rebell: therefore to pleaſe God effectually, he walked in his ſimplicitie. O that our Chriſtian Princes had ſo great meaſure of Gods holy ſpirite: how many and grieuous burthens ſhould then be taken from vs, that nowe Chriſtian eyes and eares can hard-ly beholde and heare? how many ſinnes ſhould be extinct and buried, that nowe vaine pollicie doth maintaine and ſtrengthen? The tyme is paſt, and I will ſay no more.

The

before the Queenes Maieſtie.

The God of all mercy, and Father of all conſolation, enſpire our harts with wiſedome, that we maye walke before God in our owne ſimplicitie. That what his holy worde hath ſpoken, we may humbly heare, and reaſon not againſt it, becauſe of our common wealth. Then ſhall we ende theſe ſhort and euill dayes with gladneſſe. And when Chriſt ſhall appeare in glorie and maieſtie to iudge the quick and deade, wee ſhall ſtande on the ryght hande, in the number of hys Elect, and heare that laſt and happieſt ſentence that neuer ſhall bee called back agayne: Come ye bleſſed of my father, and poſſeſſe the kingdome which is prepared for you, from the beginning of the worlde. The which time the Lorde bring haſtily vppon vs, euen for his Sonnes ſake Ieſus Chriſt our Sauiour: to whome with the holye Ghoſt, three perſons and one god, be all honour, and glorye both now and euer. Amē.

FINIS.

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